Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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R 251727Z AUG 75 FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9464

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E.O. 11652: N/A TAGS: PGOV,PINT,BB

SUBJ: BARBADOS PRIMIN BARROW RESHUFFLES CABINET

1. ON AUGUST 24, DURING CLOSING STAGES OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF GOVERNING DEMOCRATIC LABOR PARTY (DLP), IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT A CABINET RESHUFFLE INVOLVING THREE MINISTRIES WOULD GO INTO EFFECT IN MID-SEPTEMBER. MINISTRIES AFFECTED ARE HEALTH AND WELFARE; EDUCATION, YOUTH AFFAIRS, SPORTS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT; AND COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKS. FROM SEPTEMBER 15, FIRST WILL BE HEADED BY ERSKINE SANDIFORD, NOW MINISTER OF EDUCATION; SECOND BY FREDERICK SMITH, NOW MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKS; AND THIRD BY DR. RAMESES CADDLE, NOW MINISTER OF HEALTH.

2. COMMENT: RUMORS OF IMPENDING CHANGES IN THE CABINET HAD BEEN CIRCULATING FOR SOME TIME, AND ALL THOSE MINISTERS WHO HAVE BEEN MOVED HAD BEEN IDENTIFIED AS AMONG THOSE LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED BY ANY MOVE. DR. CADDLE AND HEALTH MINISTRY HAD COME UNDER PARTICULARLY HEAVY FIRE, ESPECIALLY FOLLOWING THE RECENT DISCLOSURE THAT MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF SUPPLIES HAD BEEN STOLEN FROM THE QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL. SANDIFORD IS SAID TO HAVE FALLEN OUT OF FAVOR WITH BARROW SOME MONTHS AGO, THOUGH EMBASSY SOURCES DISAGREE AS TO THE REASONS FOR HIS DISGRACE, WHILE PM AND SMITH HAVE LONG LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MAINTAINED A LESS-THAN-CORDIAL RELATIONSHIP, AND IT MAY BE

THAT, BY REMOVING MINISTER WHO IN PUBLIC MIND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR RECENT HEAVY INCREASES IN BUS FARES (TRANSPORT BOARD IS WITHIN AREA OF JURISDICTION OF MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKS), BARROW HOPED DISASSOCIATE HIMSELF FROM THIS UNPOPULAR MEASURE. CADDLE, WHO IS NOTORIOUSLY INEPT ADMINISTRATOR, IS EXTREMELY POOR CHOICE FOR POST IN WHICH HE WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR FAR MORE PEOPLE AND EQUIPMENT THAT HE NOW IS. CABINET CHANGES HAVE STILLED, AT LEAST FOR TIME BEING, SPECULATION THAT PM WOULD CALL FOR ELECTIONS WELL BEFORE THEY ARE DUE. EMBASSY NOW BELIEVES THEY UNLIKELY TAKE PLACE BEFORE NEXT SUMMER.

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